



General Description

An infiltration basin is a shallow impoundment that is designed to infiltrate stormwater. Infiltration basins use the natural filtering ability of the soil to remove pollutants in stormwater runoff. Infiltration facilities store runoff until it gradually infiltrates into the soil and eventually into the water table. This practice has high pollutant removal efficiency and can also help recharge groundwater, thus helping to maintain low flows in stream systems. Infiltration basins can be challenging to apply on many sites, however, because of soils requirements. In addition, some studies have shown relatively high failure rates compared with other management practices.

Inspection/Maintenance Considerations

Infiltration basins perform better in well-drained permeable soils. Infiltration basins in areas of low permeability can clog within a couple years, and require more frequent inspections and maintenance. The use and regular maintenance of pretreatment BMPs will significantly minimize maintenance requirements for the basin. Spill response procedures and controls should be implemented to prevent spills from reaching the infiltration system.

Scarification or other disturbance should only be performed when there are actual signs of clogging or significant loss of infiltrative capacity, rather than on a routine basis. Always remove deposited sediments before scarification, and use a hand-guided rotary tiller, if possible, or a disc harrow pulled by a light tractor. This BMP may require groundwater monitoring. Basins cannot be put into operation until the upstream tributary area is stabilized.

Maintenance Concerns, Objectives, and Goals

- Vector Control
- Clogged soil or outlet structures
- Vegetation/Landscape Maintenance
- Groundwater contamination
- Accumulation of metals
- Aesthetics

Targeted Constituents

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| ✓ Sediment | ■ |
| ✓ Nutrients | ■ |
| ✓ Trash | ■ |
| ✓ Metals | ■ |
| ✓ Bacteria | ■ |
| ✓ Oil and Grease | ■ |
| ✓ Organics | ■ |
| ✓ Oxygen Demanding | ■ |

Legend (Removal Effectiveness)

- Low ■ High
▲ Medium



Clogged infiltration basins with surface standing water can become a breeding area for mosquitoes and midges. Maintenance efforts associated with infiltration basins should include frequent inspections to ensure that water infiltrates into the subsurface completely (recommended infiltration rate of 72 hours or less) and that vegetation is carefully managed to prevent creating mosquito and other vector habitats.

Inspection Activities	Suggested Frequency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Observe drain time for a storm after completion or modification of the facility to confirm that the desired drain time has been obtained. ■ Newly established vegetation should be inspected several times to determine if any landscape maintenance (reseeding, irrigation, etc.) is necessary. 	Post construction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inspect for the following issues: differential accumulation of sediment, signs of wetness or damage to structures, erosion of the basin floor, dead or dying grass on the bottom, condition of riprap, drain time, signs of petroleum hydrocarbon contamination, standing water, trash and debris, sediment accumulation, slope stability, pretreatment device condition 	Semi-annual and after extreme events
Maintenance Activities	Suggested Frequency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Factors responsible for clogging should be repaired immediately. ■ Weed once monthly during the first two growing seasons. 	Post construction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stabilize eroded banks. ■ Repair undercut and eroded areas at inflow and outflow structures. ■ Maintain access to the basin for regular maintenance activities. ■ Mow as appropriate for vegetative cover species. ■ Monitor health of vegetation and replace as necessary. ■ Control mosquitoes as necessary. ■ Remove litter and debris from infiltration basin area as required. 	Standard maintenance (as needed)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mow and remove grass clippings, litter, and debris. ■ Trim vegetation at the beginning and end of the wet season to prevent establishment of woody vegetation and for aesthetic and vector reasons. ■ Replant eroded or barren spots to prevent erosion and accumulation of sediment. 	Semi-annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Scrape bottom and remove sediment when accumulated sediment reduces original infiltration rate by 25-50%. Restore original cross-section and infiltration rate. Properly dispose of sediment. ■ Seed or sod to restore ground cover. ■ Disc or otherwise aerate bottom. ■ Dethatch basin bottom. 	3-5 year maintenance

Additional Information

In most cases, sediment from an infiltration basin does not contain toxins at levels posing a hazardous concern. Studies to date indicate that pond sediments are generally below toxicity limits and can be safely landfilled or disposed onsite. Onsite sediment disposal is always preferable (if local authorities permit) as long as the sediments are deposited away from the shoreline to prevent their reentry into the pond and away from recreation areas, where they could possibly be ingested by young children. Sediments should be tested for toxicants in compliance with current disposal requirements if land uses in the catchment include commercial or industrial zones, or if visual or olfactory indications of pollution are noticed. Sediments containing high levels of pollutants should be disposed of properly.

Light equipment, which will not compact the underlying soil, should be used to remove the top layer of sediment. The remaining soil should be tilled and revegetated as soon as possible.

Sediment removal within the basin should be performed when the sediment is dry enough so that it is cracked and readily separates from the basin floor. This also prevents smearing of the basin floor.

References

King County, Stormwater Pollution Control Manual – Best Management Practices for Businesses. July, 1995 Available at: <ftp://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/dss/spcm/SPCM.HTM>

Metropolitan Council, Urban Small Sites Best Management Practices Manual. Available at: <http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/Watershed/BMP/manual.htm>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Post-Construction Stormwater Management in New Development & Redevelopment BMP Factsheets. Available at: http://www.cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/menuofbmps/bmp_files.cfm

Ventura Countywide Stormwater Quality Management Program, Technical Guidance Manual for Stormwater Quality Control Measures. July, 2002.